

CREATION OF A LIBRARY OF CONGRESS TRUST FUND BOARD

FEBRUARY 11, 1925.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. LUCE, from the Committee on the Library, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 12125]

The purpose of this bill is, first, to provide an orderly and safe way by which the Library of Congress may profit by money gifts and bequests. The same considerations apply as in the case of the Smithsonian Institution, which has done such useful work to the great advantage of the country, partly through applying the benefactions of public-spirited citizens to the uses of research. The bill has been carefully drawn to the end that all interests may be thoroughly safeguarded.

Secondly, the bill contemplates a further gain from private benefactions through supplementing the appropriations for the Library with the income from funds given in order that employees may be compensated for work outside the ordinary routine. In certain instances it would be markedly advantageous to the Library if employees could be paid for work out of hours. In other instances there would be gain if more expert assistance could be had than is available with the standard salary grade. The obstacle now in the way of such benefits is a provision of law adopted while the war was in progress by reason of the belief that numerous dollar-a-year men attached to one of the bureaus of the Government and in fact wholly maintained by outside institutions, societies, or endowments, were preparing compilations which, as publications of the bureau, went out under Government auspices and Government frank. The objection was to possible propaganda by agents for outside interests, agents paid directly by such interests and therefore presumably controlled by them. Nothing of this sort would seem to be threatened by the proposal here. Under this proposal the employee affected would be a regular employee of the Government with a salary from it covering his routine work. An honorarium, for service outside

of the routine and for expenses, would be paid through a governmental agency from a fund openly committed to it for the purpose.]

To illustrate the advantages to be gained it may be explained that the larger bibliographic undertakings of to-day are cooperative, being carried out through the pooling of contributions by libraries, perhaps assisted by grant from some individual society or foundation. For example, an undertaking is now in process for a "Union list of serials" in various American libraries, the result of which will not merely help reference, but, by avoiding unnecessary duplications, effect economies. The Library of Congress can not contribute cash to such an undertaking, but might contribute part time of an employee, or permit him to give outside time, provided he were at liberty to accept some compensation from the common fund or grant. Again, it might be desirable to accept an endowment to provide for some activity outside of the routine, yet appropriate, which would require of some member of the staff a special expert knowledge, judgment, and professional authority, and involve on his part special labor and responsibility, extra time, and even personal expense.

To meet somewhat similar conditions, the Agriculture appropriation act approved July 24, 1919, made an exception in the case of officials of the Department of Agriculture, as well as those engaged in the cooperative activities of the Forest Service. The library simply seeks the same opportunity to make its work more helpful.

On the advice of men experienced in the handling of trust funds, it is recommended that the bill be amended by inserting after the word "limited," in line 1 of page 4, the words "including the power to sell," so that the sentence will read: "The board shall have perpetual succession, with the usual powers and obligations of a trustee, as herein limited, including the power to sell, in respect of all property, moneys, or securities which shall be conveyed, transferred, assigned, bequeathed, delivered, or paid over to it for the purposes above specified."

So amended, the committee recommends that the bill do pass.

